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New York

President:	Mr. Moratinos Cuyaubé	(Spain)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Valle
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Wang Guangya
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Fischer
	Pakistan	Mr. Khalid
	Philippines	Mr. Romulo
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Denisov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United States of America	Mr. Danforth

Agenda

The situation in Africa

Briefing by the President of Nigeria and current Chairman of the African Union

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04-52142 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.20 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Africa

Briefing by the President of Nigeria and current Chairman of the African Union

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I request the Protocol Officer to escort His Excellency Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to his seat at the Council table.

Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, was escorted to a seat at the Council table.

The President *(spoke in Spanish)*: On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and current Chairman of the African Union, His Excellency Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo.

I also welcome very warmly the President of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma.

I also welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, at this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

I should like to draw the attention of members to document S/2004/755, which contains the text of a letter dated 22 September 2004 from Nigeria addressed to the President of the Security Council.

Before giving the floor to the Secretary-General and President Obasanjo, I should like, in my capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, to make some general comments on the item under discussion.

We all join in appreciating the tremendous efforts that President Obasanjo of Nigeria and the African Union are undertaking to find a solution to the very grave problem of Darfur, a satisfactory solution that would put an end to the suffering experienced by so many people. The Security Council cannot overlook the needs of 1.2 million refugees and displaced persons and tens of thousands of victims, as well as the threat of a regional crisis.

Last week I was able to visit Sudan. In my trip I was able to perceive the complexity of the conflict in Darfur. There are no simplistic lessons or solutions to be found. I had the impression that the humanitarian situation is beginning to improve, however slowly, especially in the refugee camps where international assistance is being effectively delivered. This, without any doubt, is a first step and the most urgent one that needs to be taken.

Nonetheless, the attacks on the civilian population, although somewhat lessened, do not appear to have stopped entirely. For this reason, it is essential that the cease-fire agreement signed by the parties in April in N'djamena be respected. The Security Council notes that the Government of Sudan needs to disarm and control the Janjaweed militias and put an end to the attacks on the civilian population. At the same time, it must insist that rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement, fulfil their obligations under the cease-fire and cantonment arrangements.

It is in this area that the work being done by the African Union observer mission is extremely commendable. It will help to find a peaceful solution to the crisis. Their commitment is helping to save lives in Darfur and demonstrates Africa's will to manage and resolve its own conflicts. The Council has recognized this fundamental role and has supported the expansion of this mission. The international community is ready to provide logistical and financial support for the African Union's efforts in this regard.

At the same time, the African Union is sponsoring the Abuja peace negotiations, which have been given fresh political impetus by President Obasanjo. However, this process, which is crucial to make any solution last, has its ups and downs. The rebel groups and, of course, also, the Government of Sudan, must understand that the international community expects them to negotiate in good faith and in a reasonable spirit that will enable them to reach an agreement that can be implemented as early as possible.

We must also not forget that in the south of Sudan there is another conflict that has been going on for more than 20 years and has caused indescribable suffering. Unfortunately, the last phase of this process has been negatively affected by the events in Darfur. We must be watchful to ensure that the Naivasha negotiations can be concluded successfully. This will also have very positive effects on Darfur.

For all these reasons, the Council will continue to give Sudan all the necessary attention. It will continue without any doubt to be a question on our agenda. I hope that its future work will benefit from what President Obasanjo will be good enough to tell us today and from the work that he will continue to do in the future.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I now give the floor to the Secretary-General.

The Secretary-General: The tragedy in Darfur is one of the greatest challenges the international community faces today. The whole world is watching this tragedy unfold, and it is watching us. No one can be allowed to sidestep or ignore their responsibility to protect the innocent civilians. Our urgent task is to do everything we can to help protect the people of Darfur from further humanitarian suffering, terrible violence and human rights abuses, and to bring their agony to an end.

The humanitarian emergency in Darfur is growing, and much, much more needs to be done to mitigate it. I take this opportunity to reiterate my strong appeal to the international community to respond urgently and generously to the humanitarian appeal for Darfur.

The African Union (AU) has assumed the great responsibility of leadership in both the security and political areas, and I warmly thank it for doing so. I am very pleased to see the Chairman of the AU, President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, here with us in the Council. We must give the AU our unwavering support in word and in deed.

The United Nations is supporting the AU's efforts to strengthen its operations in all parts of Darfur. Civilians are still being attacked. We must support the expansion of the AU's mission to help the people there. A proactive AU presence can help make them safer. But that will require substantial international resources — logistics support, equipment and financing. Every country that can help must help, and thereby give content and meaning to our own words of concern.

The United Nations is also strongly supporting the AU's leadership of the political process. The only route to true long-term safety for the civilians in Darfur, and to the return of 1.6 million people to their homes, is a genuine political settlement. We all must help the African Union to achieve that goal. I call on the entire international community to make unambiguously clear to both sides that we firmly expect them to resume negotiations for a political settlement in Darfur, and that they must bring to the table the spirit of compromise necessary to reach agreement.

I see that the Chairperson of the African Union Commission, Mr. Konaré, is here; we welcome his presence in the Council.

The crisis in Darfur is not simply an African problem. It concerns the entire international community. Whatever name we give it, it imposes responsibilities on all of us. We all must rise to this challenge.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the Secretary-General for his statement and for his continued commitment to finding a lasting solution to the problem.

I give the floor to Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and current Chairman of the African Union.

President Obasanjo: I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to thank you for the opportunity to address this gathering on an issue that is of paramount importance to Africa and indeed, as we have just heard from the Secretary-General of our Organization, of paramount importance to the world. May I also compliment the Russian Federation on the able manner in which it conducted the affairs of the Council last month.

The situation in Darfur poses serious challenges to the African Union (AU) and to the international community. It is therefore fitting that it has, in recent months, engaged the attention of all those who desire peace and stability in our continent and, indeed, in the world. It is against that background that, at the recent

summit held in Addis Ababa last July, African leaders resolved to confront the problem in all its ramifications — military, political, economic and social.

A major outcome of our deliberations on that occasion was the constitution of the AU Observer Protection Force in Darfur. Much earlier, in the face of the unfolding grave humanitarian crisis in that region, the AU had initiated a peace process which culminated in the signing, in N'Djamena, in April 2004, of the Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement. That Agreement provided for a Ceasefire Monitoring Committee, with the mandate to report to a Joint Commission consisting of the parties, Chadian mediators and the international community.

It is with satisfaction that I observe that the African Union received the cooperation of the Government of Sudan, and quickly mobilized and dispatched observers to the region. Subsequently, the Peace and Security Council of the African Union coordinated yet another round of negotiations, in Addis Ababa in July 2004. The subsequent Addis Ababa agreement reinforced the N'Djamena accord by enhancing security in Darfur and facilitating humanitarian assistance to the victims.

I wish to stress that, in all these efforts of the African Union, the preoccupation has been the achievement of peace, security and development in Darfur and in the Sudan as a whole. It is the conviction of the leadership of the African Union that linkages between peace, security and development should be maintained if the objectives of the international community are to be realized, as envisaged in the Millennium Development Goals. This is consistent with the ideals of the New Partnership for Africa's Development.

Let me now address the most recent major initiative that the African Union has taken on Darfur under my chairmanship. I refer to the peace talks in Abuja, coordinated by the Government of Nigeria, between the Government of the Sudan, the Sudan Liberation Army and the Justice and Equality Movement — all under the auspices of the African Union.

The negotiation was, as expected, not easy. After agreeing to a four-point agenda on humanitarian issues, security issues, political arrangements and economic and social arrangements, the parties moved to consider the first item — humanitarian issues. We were able to persuade the parties to agree on a protocol that guarantees unimpeded and unrestricted access for humanitarian workers and assistance to all internally displaced persons and refugees. Specifically, the agreement would allow the United Nations and other non-governmental humanitarian assistance organizations to travel along routes proposed by the United Nations, without restrictions or escorts, in order to deliver assistance to areas controlled by any party as well as facilitate all activities undertaken.

On the issue of the protection of civilians, the protocol reaffirmed the commitment of the parties to take all necessary measures to prevent all attacks, threats, intimidation and any other form of violence against civilians, by any party or group, including the Janjaweed and other militias. It also provided for the protection of the property and livelihood of individuals and communities, and ensures that the principle of voluntary return is fully respected and complied with, consistent with general United Nations return principles. The parties further agreed to maintain the civilian character of internally displaced persons; to ensure the rights of internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their areas of origin; to protect the rights of internally displaced persons and refugees in their areas of origin in order to enable them to return, should they choose to do so; and to ensure that all forces and individuals involved or reported to be involved in violations of rights of internally displaced persons, vulnerable groups and other civilians will be transparently investigated and held accountable by the appropriate authorities.

The proposal on security issues is on the table. The resistance movement requested a recess to enable them to brief their colleagues outside the venue of the talks and a one-month recess was agreed to.

The African Union is conscious of the important collaborative role that the international community, and particularly the United Nations, through the Security Council, has played and can continue to play in enhancing our peace efforts in Darfur. That is why I apprised the Council of developments on the Abuja peace talks through my letter on the subject, which was copied to the Council. We are determined to usher in an era of peace in Darfur because we believe that the peace and security of Sudan will have a positive impact on the subregion, on the African continent, and, indeed, on the world. It is essential, therefore, that our

efforts be complemented and that we do not work at cross purposes. On behalf of the African Union, I wish to place on record our appreciation of the humanitarian assistance being provided to refugees and internally displaced persons by donors and the international community. An economically strong and viable Sudan will definitely be at peace with itself and the international community.

Against the background of the challenges that the Darfur conflict poses for our region, there is a need to go beyond the provision of humanitarian assistance. The capacity of the AU should be enhanced and strengthened through the provision of logistical support, as well as the training and deployment of personnel. In addition, there is the need to provide the African Union with the wherewithal to effectively carry out its current tasks, including the maintenance of a force of about 3,000 troops. I therefore urge donors and the international community to increase the present level of assistance to the African Union.

I wish to acknowledge the collective wisdom of the Security Council, which, by its resolution 1564 (2004) of 18 September 2004, not only underscored the importance of such assistance but also welcomed the leadership role and engagement of the African Union in addressing the situation in Darfur, as well as pledging support for the African Union in its resolve to enhance its presence there. The expansion of the African Union presence, called for in the resolution, is, indeed, welcome; but it can only be realized through sustained financial backing. We should avoid a situation where African Union troops on the ground are handicapped owing to a lack of requisite financial resources and logistical support.

The African Union has been seized with other issues that affect peace and security on our continent. As the Council is no doubt aware, the African Union has now established the Peace and Security Council, a major organ which focuses on peace and security issues in our region. That Council has become operational. We are grateful to the Secretary-General for the assistance that he provided our organization in that regard and we look forward to a close working relationship between that organ and the Security Council.

Let me also convey Africa's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his personal interest in and quick response to the situation in Darfur. I believe that this has helped not only to inform the Council of the magnitude of the challenges involved in arresting the deteriorating situation in that region of Sudan, but has also helped to mobilize support of the international community.

It is a matter of satisfaction for us in Africa that the peace process in Liberia is now irreversible. In that connection, we welcome the recent decision of the Council, by its resolution 1561 (2004) of 17 September 2004, to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia. What is now required of the international community is to stay the course so that our collective investment in peace is not in vain and our achievements are sustained.

We also acknowledge the recent decision of the Council, in its resolution 1562 (2004), to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone. The positive developments in that country are indicative of what can be achieved when the international community works together, and collaborates proactively with subregional and regional actors in pursuit of common goals.

In a similar vein, the African Union appreciates the efforts of the United Nations in the Great Lakes region, including the Democratic Republic of Congo. The enormity of the challenges confronting the Government and people of that country cannot be overemphasized. We welcome the Secretary-General's recommendation to expand the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. An early and favourable decision of the Council on that matter would ensure that our shared goals for peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo are attained.

We are in a new Africa. This is an Africa that believes firmly in democracy, human rights, economic reform, partnership and sustainable development. The African Union has, of its own volition, fully embraced the challenges of peace and security in our region. Across the length and breadth of the continent, African leaders have — with courage, and in the face of overwhelming odds — initiated and implemented policies to strengthen democratic governance and the rule of law and to enhance the peace and security of the peoples in our respective countries.

We urge the Security Council to continue its current positive role in support of these efforts, and the international community at large to increase their level

of assistance, especially in the areas of capacity-building and infrastructure development, to ensure the achievement of social and economic development in Africa. That is the surest way for us to arrest crises and instability on our continent. I wish to assure you that Africa will continue to cooperate with the Council in the pursuit of economic development, stability, peace and security for Africa.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for his statement, and I believe I may speak for all of the members of the Security Council in expressing my deep appreciation for the leadership that he has brought to the African Union, as well as his personal and political commitment to using peaceful and diplomatic means to facilitate a resolution of the various conflicts on that continent.

I will now give the floor to Council members who wish to address questions to President Obasanjo.

Mr. Danforth (United States of America): I thank President Obasanjo for his briefing and, more important, for his excellent leadership and for the work of the African Union, especially in connection with Darfur. We have now adopted two resolutions in the Security Council on the subjection of Darfur. The most recent, resolution 1564 (2004), was adopted on Saturday. The resolution was designed to give as much support as we possibly could to the work of the African Union.

My question relates to whether we are doing everything that we — that is, the Security Council and interested countries — should be doing to support the work of the African Union. Our sense is that time is of the essence in Darfur. We are told that some 10,000 people are dying each month, and our sense is that the sooner African Union troops are deployed in Darfur, the more lives that will be saved. My question, therefore, is this: is there anything that we should be doing to facilitate the rapid deployment of the African Union in Darfur? More generally, is there anything that the Security Council should be doing that it is not doing to further peace in Darfur?

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I give the floor to President Obasanjo to respond.

President Obasanjo: In response to the question about what the Security Council should be doing that it is not doing, I would say that it is doing a lot. There is a proverb in my part of the world concerning lice. They may be in your clothes, in your bed — everywhere. Lice do not die easily. So when you find one, you have to put it on your fingernail and press it with another fingernail to kill it. And when you have done so, you see a little blood on your fingernail. The saying is that, as long as you have lice in your clothes, your fingernails will never be free of blood. We have lice in our clothes in Darfur, and therefore there will always be blood on our fingernails. Until we get rid of the lice, our fingernails will not be without blood.

That is what I would say: until we are able, together, to resolve the problem of Darfur, we will never be able to say we have done enough — we will never be able to say, "Yes, here is *uhuru*, here is freedom".

But I would say, yes, we are doing a great deal of what we need to do. I would also say, here and now, that, with all due respect, the five permanent members of the Council should really work together. A situation in which it appears that one country is supporting the rebels — they call themselves "resistance fighters" — and another country is seen as supporting the Government of Sudan does not provide uniform backing for putting uniform pressure on the two sides, the Government and the rebels. And we need to do that.

Of course, as I have said very often, there will be a need for adequate logistic backing for what the African Union has to do in Darfur.

Sir Emyr Jones Parry (United Kingdom): I would like to thank President Obasanjo for his briefing. A number of us recall with a great deal of pleasure the privilege of listening to him in Abuja, when the Security Council mission went to Nigeria.

It is clear from his presentation this morning that we all share the goal of preventing conflict, ending it very quickly where it exists, and building peace. The commitment of the Council and the United Nations to Africa — in particular, to support President Obasanjo and the efforts of the African Union — is, I hope, obvious. That applies not just to peacekeeping and establishing peace, but to the whole range of issues. We have heard President Obasanjo at least twice this week make clear how important the Millennium Development Goals are and why it is that we need to support the New Partnership for Africa's Development and the efforts being made within the continent. I think

that imposes on the Council and on the entire membership of the United Nations a particular obligation to support Africa and to support his leadership.

I would like to ask him specifically whether we are doing enough as we try to firm up the institutional links between the African Union (AU) and the United Nations, and as he tries to develop his capacities. What can we do to help him to provide the means to enable him to take on and actually tackle successfully the roles and objectives that he set out so clearly this morning?

Secondly, in looking at the goal of peace and security throughout the continent, we have, of course, underscored very clearly some of the issues that the High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change is addressing today. How do we tackle the issues in good time? How do we stop conflict before it breaks out? How do we bring forward those difficult cases so that the African Union can address them and so that the Security Council can do so as well? I am thinking of cases such as the situation in northern Uganda, where there are real issues, which are being dealt with domestically, but where there is also an international dimension. How can we focus on those and bring the Council into coordinated action with the African Union?

In terms of Darfur, I thank President Obasanjo for his encouraging account this morning. Our immediate priority, of course, is to stop the killings and the deaths. Successive resolutions have set out the requirements of the Council. What is clear is that the Government of the Sudan needs lots of assistance. We have encouraged in particular the efforts of the African Union. But I would like specifically to encourage the Government of the Sudan and the African Union in the coming days — very quickly — to identify exactly what reinforcements are needed on the ground in Darfur, what the Government of the Sudan is prepared to accept, what the African Union can provide and then, crucially, what it needs need in order to get the monitors and the troops on the ground.

I think that our joint objective is clear, as is the obligation on us to provide the means and the support so that the troops and the monitors can actually get there and stop the killing.

My last question relates specifically to policing, where so far the African Union has not been tasked with a police mission — and to date that has not been suggested. But there is a very serious lack of policing, as well as of military deployment. In the longer term, it is policing that is more important. The European Union is intent on sending a fact-finding mission to work in parallel with the AU on policing. What are President Obasanjo's views specifically on filling that gap, so as to provide much-needed police cover and, especially, security, to the displaced people who at the moment feel so insecure?

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): If members of the Council consider it appropriate, perhaps the President of Nigeria could respond to questions by Council members after they have all been asked, rather than after each speaker.

Mr. Wang Guangya (China) *(spoke in Chinese)*: First, I would like to thank the President of Nigeria and Chairman of the African Union, Mr. Obasanjo, for his briefing. China greatly appreciates Mr. Obasanjo's tireless efforts to find a solution to the Darfur problem.

The Chinese Government is very concerned about the situation in Darfur. We hope that the humanitarian and security situation will soon improve, and we firmly support the leading role played there by the African Union.

For us, the top priority now is to achieve, as soon as possible, expanded deployment by the African Union. China hopes that the African Union and the Government of the Sudan will achieve consensus on relevant details as soon as possible, in order to achieve that expansion at an early date. At the same time, the international community is called upon to provide all possible assistance to the African Union in that deployment. The Chinese Government is also actively considering providing such support, within its capacity.

The genesis of the Darfur problem is very complicated. At the core of the problem is the need to achieve peace and alleviate the humanitarian crisis. Only through a negotiated political settlement will it be possible to achieve durable peace and tranquillity in the Darfur area. We support the African Union in its continued push for political negotiations and we call upon all parties, especially the rebel groups, to demonstrate more flexibility so that a comprehensive agreement can be achieved as soon as possible.

I would also like to thank the President for calling upon the five permanent members to take a

unified stand. As one of the permanent members of the Council, China is willing to adopt an objective and fair stand on solving problems in Africa, including that of Darfur.

Finally, I have two questions for Mr. Obasanjo. First, what is the current state of consultations between the African Union and the Government of the Sudan concerning expanded deployment, and what kind of concrete assistance do they ask of the international community? Secondly, does the African Union have a timetable for its efforts to promote negotiations, and what kind of coordination do they expect from the Security Council?

Mr. Khalid (Pakistan): Let me join others in extending a warm welcome to His Excellency President Obasanjo.

The United Nations is an indispensable actor in Africa. Its commitment to Africa is strong and abiding. The Security Council is deeply engaged both with individual conflict situations and cross-cutting issues that affect the continent.

It is encouraging that reliable partners in the efforts to promote peace and security are emerging. African institutions are increasingly involved in finding African solutions to African problems. Regional and subregional organizations are making growing contribution to conflict management, peacekeeping and post-conflict peace-building. In particular, we appreciate the role of the African Union under the leadership of President Obasanjo. We are grateful for his highly insightful briefing, which has made us wiser concerning the continuing challenges and opportunities.

Conflict has sapped Africa's potential for too long, but the continent now seems to be turning a corner. Progress in the peace processes in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Somalia and Guinea-Bissau is heartening. Challenges in Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Sudan must be addressed through continued constructive engagement. Conflict management alone, however, cannot lead to comprehensive and durable peace. Pakistan believes there should be four priorities: conflict prevention pacific settlement of disputes, addressing the root causes of conflict, and focusing on the inextricable link between peace and development.

I would like to raise two questions, the first of which relates to Liberia. I recall that Mr. Bryant, Chairman of the National Transitional Government of the Republic of Liberia, in his address to the General Assembly on 22 September reiterated his call for the lifting of sanctions on the timber and diamond sectors to enable the Transitional Government to create jobs and attend to the enormous social needs of the people. We would appreciate if President Obasanjo could share the views of the African Union with the Council on that issue.

We have watched with deep anguish the events unfolding in Darfur ever since the rebellion broke out over 18 months ago. Pakistan has consistently underscored the importance of immediate humanitarian assistance, an end to all violence, a start of negotiations between the parties and a solution within the sovereignty, unity and territorial integrity of Sudan. We are glad that significant improvement has taken place in Darfur. The Government of Sudan is making its best efforts to meet its commitments.

It is important to maintain constructive engagement of the international community in an objective and balanced manner. In that context, we must ensure that our actions do not encourage the rebels into intransigence.

We appreciate the leading role of the African Union and the leadership and personal engagement of President Obasanjo with the peace talks in Abuja. We have been following closely the African Union's decisions on Darfur, which we find balanced and objective.

The enhanced presence of the African Union monitoring and protection mission in Darfur was the main recommendation of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative. Pakistan fully supports that. We hope that the African Union and the Government of the Sudan will soon be able to discuss and agree on the appropriate size and mandate of that mission.

The Security Council has already expressed its support for an enhanced African Union mission. We would like to ask President Obasanjo how the African Union expects that expression of the Council's support to be transformed into concrete assistance.

Mr. Fischer (Germany): I would like to thank President Obasanjo for briefing us on the Abuja peace

talks and for his efforts in bringing the parties in the Darfur crisis back to the negotiating table in Abuja.

The Security Council's most recent resolution on Sudan, resolution 1564 (2004) of 18 September, stressed the importance of the African Union, and it will contribute towards increasing the African Union authority vis-à-vis the parties to the conflict. I congratulate the African Union and its member States for their willingness to take over the leading role in the efforts to solve the Darfur crisis.

The working draft of the African Union plan for enhancing the effectiveness of the AU mission in Darfur, which was submitted yesterday in Addis Ababa, seems to be a very good basis for playing such a role. It will also help in implementing the mandate contained in Council resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1564 (2004).

The African Union (AU) is shouldering a burden that is heavy for it and for its newly developed conflict management mechanisms. I am sure that international support for this effort will be willingly given if and when the AU asks for it. Germany has been supportive of the AU role in helping to resolve the Darfur conflict. The European Union (EU) also stands ready to support the AU mission, in close coordination with the United Nations.

Resolution 1564 (2004) is a clear signal that the Security Council is determined to keep up the pressure on the Government of the Sudan, on the Sudanese Liberation Movement/Army and on the Justice and Equality Movement to return to the negotiation table and to meet the demands contained in Security Council resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1564 (2004). Our goal is to stop the killing and the suffering of the people in Darfur. The EU will examine appropriate measures — including sanctions — against the Government of the Sudan and all other relevant parties, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1564 (2004), if tangible progress is not achieved in that direction.

I would like to ask President Obasanjo and Chairman Konaré for their opinions on several points. How can the Security Council and other actors — such as the EU — best supplement AU efforts to resuscitate negotiations in Abuja and Naivasha? How do they envisage disarmament of the Janjaweed taking place in Darfur? What conditions would have to be put in place in order to increase the willingness of the Government of the Sudan to tackle disarmament? What measures could be taken to ensure that the concerns and special threats can be addressed with regard to women and girls among internally displaced persons and the population in Darfur? In which areas could the United Nations, the EU and their member States be of special assistance to the AU mission in Darfur? And one last question: do they also see a role for the League of Arab States?

Mr. Romulo (Philippines): My delegation welcomes the presence today of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Chairperson of the African Union (AU), Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo. We thank him for taking time out from his busy schedule to brief the Council about the African Union's effort in Darfur. Mr. Obasanjo's briefing is a valuable contribution to the Council's consideration of the situation in Darfur. The Philippines greatly appreciates the tireless efforts of the President as the mediator of the Abuja peace talks on Darfur. We congratulate President Obasanjo on his address yesterday before the General Assembly, where he outlined the work that has already been done and that needs to be done by the African Union.

My delegation has always advocated the regional approach in resolving the crisis in Africa. Therefore, we fully recognize and support the AU's leading role aimed at achieving a peaceful conclusion of the crisis and the protection of the welfare of the people of Darfur.

As long as the international community continues to lend its support to address the humanitarian requirements of the crisis and to send correct, adequate and effective messages to the parties concerned, we are confident that the search for elusive peace in Sudan will be found in the very near future. The Security Council's acknowledgement of the leadership role of the AU and its support for the AU in the resolution of the crisis is one of those messages. Insistence that all the parties — both the Government and the rebels — comply with earlier commitments and remain committed to the negotiation process is another.

My delegation appreciates the valuable contribution of the AU through its deployment of the African Union mission in Sudan, which should be appropriately supported and assisted by the international community, including the Security Council. We urge the enlargement and early deployment of the mission in that regard. We also

welcome the announcement by the Government of the Sudan that it is agreeing to an increase in the size of the current AU presence in Darfur.

My questions have already been answered by President Obasanjo, so I wish to take this opportunity to acknowledge the work of the African Union in resolving the myriad problems in other regions of Africa. We positively note in particular the reaffirmation of the AU's commitment and determination to effectively support the outcome of the Somalia National Reconciliation Conference, and we look forward to future assistance as the incoming Somali national institutions are reconstructed and consolidated.

In closing, we would like to express our best wishes for success to President Obasanjo for all his present and future endeavours.

Mr. Denisov (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I should like to welcome President Obasanjo to the Security Council. We are pleased at the opportunity to learn first-hand about the assessment of the African Union (AU) with regard to developments in the Sudan, particularly those in Darfur.

Russia has consistently supported the peacekeeping efforts of the AU and the personal efforts of President Obasanjo to facilitate a swift settlement of the Darfur crisis. We are sure that peace in the Sudan can be achieved only by political means, through more active use of the AU's potential and through the development of cooperation between the AU and the United Nations. Of course, all the Sudanese parties must comply in good faith with their respective obligations.

My colleagues and the ministers present here today who have already spoken have answered the questions we had wanted to ask of President Obasanjo, particularly concerning what the Security Council could do in addition to providing political support for the AU's efforts in Darfur and what could be done to provide for parallel progress in the Abuja and Naivasha negotiating processes.

Mr. Baali (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Permit me at the outset to bid a warm welcome to President Obasanjo and to thank him very much for having kindly shared with us his vision and his message of hope concerning developments on the African continent and for having given us the opportunity to listen to his valuable briefing on the negotiating process in Abuja. We followed with great attention and much hope the various stages described.

I should also like to take this opportunity to pay a special tribute to President Obasanjo for his tireless efforts since the beginning of his chairmanship of the African Union (AU) to find a political and negotiated solution to the wrenching crisis of Darfur and to restore peace and security, which are so essential for the well-being of all the Sudanese people.

Algeria, which is following the developments in Darfur very carefully and at the highest level, has every confidence in the work being done by the African Union and fully supports President Obasanjo's approach aimed at rallying both sides around an agreement that will be a solution, not only for the Sudan, but for the entire region. We are also making our own contribution to support the efforts of the Chairman of the African Union.

This commitment to peace and to a settlement of conflicts through the wise and visionary use of negotiations deserves the full support of the international community. That is why Algeria welcomes both the decision that has emerged within the Council, which fully and clearly highlights the AU's leading role, and the valuable political, material and financial support that the international community is providing for its efforts.

The current suspension of the Abuja talks is cause for serious concern at a time when the untold daily suffering of the people of Darfur makes us aware of the urgent need to put an end as soon as possible to the tragedy that has so severely affected their lives.

Algeria hopes that the Abuja talks, in which we have great hope, will resume as soon as possible. We therefore call on all parties to return to the negotiating table in a spirit of cooperation and open-mindedness in order finally to build the bridges leading to a return to peace, which we sincerely hope for. The settlement of the Darfur question is crucial for the people of the Sudanese province, for the Sudan and for the peace and the stability of the entire region, in which the Sudan plays a major, strategic role.

Today, it is clichéd to say that the Darfur crisis has reached a crucial stage in its tragic course. Although there is still room for hope, the attendant

fears that the crisis will continue or deteriorate grow at each missed opportunity.

Fully cognizant of those risks, Algeria hopes that our joint action in the Council and in the international community will be one of a cooperation that adds synergy to the dynamic created by the African Union, which has led to indisputable progress in the ceasefire maintained by the parties and the agreement on a humanitarian protocol of manifest importance, which we hope will be followed by a further agreement on the crucial question of security.

We must reinforce and strengthen that promising dynamic by supporting it positively until it reaches its conclusion, all the while being vigilant not to disrupt its course. It is in that spirit that Algeria believes that there is no alternative to the active cooperation of the Government of the Sudan, with the support and the assistance of the African Union and the international community, if we are to end that crisis, whose humanitarian aspect is a call to all of us.

My delegation welcomes the offer by the Foreign Minister of the Sudan to come before the Security Council and share his vision for resolving the question of Darfur. We hope that the Council will give him an opportunity to do so as soon as possible.

Mr. de La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, we greatly welcome President Obasanjo, whose presence honours us. We have listened attentively to his comments.

Very briefly, before I address the question of Darfur, I shall comment on cooperation between the Security Council and the African Union. In short, the Council deals on a daily basis — unfortunately — with crises afflicting the African continent. We note that, at the same time, Africans are the first to be involved in resolving those crises. As President Obasanjo has said — and we are well aware — we have a new Africa. Africa is shouldering its responsibilities collectively and with determination.

My delegation is convinced that the Security Council has every interest in working closely with regional organizations, in particular with the African Union, whenever that strengthen the Council's actions. Our respective actions complement one another. We have seen that in Burundi. We see it today in the Darfur crisis, to which I will return. As well, there is cooperation with subregional organizations, and my Government is very gratified to cooperate with the Economic Community of West African States with respect to West Africa, in particular Côte d'Ivoire.

My question is both simple and complex. I am asking myself about how to enhance that cooperation's effectiveness. Might the solution be cooperation on a case-by-case basis? Or should cooperation be somehow institutionalized? I do not know. We are now reflecting on how the Council could work most effectively. Any comments from President Obasanjo on ways to improve cooperation between the African Union and the United Nations and the Council would enrich our process of reflection.

On the question of Darfur, I have no questions at this stage because the questions I had in mind have been formulated very well by preceding speakers. I have nothing to add to that list of questions.

I would like simply to take this opportunity to stress before the Council the main lines of my country's action in the Security Council. The first is that we believe we should be very demanding of the Sudanese. The Council's recent message to the Sudan in resolution 1564 (2004) must be heeded and acted on. It is a clear message: the Sudanese Government must fulfil all its obligations. In particular, it must provide safety and security for the population in Darfur and combat impunity. For their part, the rebels must end the violence and not hinder the delivery of humanitarian assistance. All the Sudanese parties must participate in good faith in the negotiations at Naivasha and Abuja. And, as the Secretary-General said, the parties must demonstrate their willingness to compromise.

The second base of our action is that the African Union must receive all the assistance from the international community that it needs. In this crisis, the African Union has an irreplaceable role in backing up the international community's demands and promoting the necessary cooperation of the Sudanese Government.

We are fully aware that deploying in that region of the Sudan an international presence composed of unarmed observers and military personnel responsible for security is not an easy undertaking. There needs to be significant planning and logistic support, as President Obasanjo has told the Council. We realize as well that it is desirable to have cooperation and assistance from Member States that possess experience in this area.

France and the European Union are ready. I think we need to act quickly. 3,000 or 4,000 men are not too many and are probably sufficient. My country will do its utmost within the institutions of the European Union to ensure that the Union can support the African Union as effectively as possible.

In conclusion, the Council, like the international community as a whole, can act only in close cooperation with the African Union. In is in that spirit that France contributed its assistance to the African Union's mission to Chad.

Mr. Sardenberg (Brazil): I welcome the presence among us of His Excellency President Olusegun Obasanjo and thank him for addressing the Council in his capacity as President of Nigeria and Chairman of the African Union.

We have been advocating in the Security Council that the African Union should be granted the opportunity to provide the Council with an authoritative and accurate perspective on the challenges ahead to achieve stability and development in Africa. We have been requesting that the African Union be invited to come to the Security Council. And to my delegation, the historical and cultural ties between Nigeria and Brazil confer even greater meaning to this occasion.

We all agree that regional organizations are increasingly relevant in the overall international effort for peace and security. They may be even more effective since they may be in a better position to detect security threats, they have better knowledge of the root causes of conflict, and they are necessarily more flexible.

Since its creation only three years ago, the African Union has proven itself royally capable of leading African countries in their efforts towards peace. We wish to take this opportunity to thank the African Union for cooperating with this Council in bringing troops and observers to Burundi, Somalia and Sudan.

Political initiatives to promote governance and stabilization have also been counting on the active support of the African Union. We cite the example of Côte d'Ivoire, where the tripartite monitoring mechanism has brought together the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations in efforts to have the benchmarks that were set up by the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement prevail over conflict. Horizontal cooperation with ECOWAS and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the Horn of Africa is ever more frequent. These initiatives translate into action the unequivocal determination and the leadership of the African Union in the resolution of crises within its continent.

Complementarities between the United Nations and regional organizations ought to be further developed and utilized. The cooperation with the African Union is thriving, and we trust that this Organization and its Member States, individually, will be forthcoming in making resources, technical assistance and logistical support available to the African Union. Partnership is key in making African ownership viable.

Brazil highly praises and welcomes the unequivocal determination of the African Union to the resolution of the crisis in Darfur, which we understand as a laudable and timely act of African ownership and leadership. In the Security Council, the Brazilian delegation has made all possible efforts in order to ensure international support for the African Union mission in Darfur as well as to safeguard its ownership and leading role in the search for a solution to the problems in that region.

Let us not forget that preventive action and early warning are at the core of regional organizations' assets in dealing with conflicts. There must be innovative ways to work within a logic of conflict avoidance, committing ourselves to eradicating underdevelopment, under-education, poverty and hunger. This growing interrelationship between security and economic and social development means there should be a better coordination among the United Nations bodies, particularly between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council through Article 65 of the Charter. As President Lula stated in opening the general debate of the fifty-ninth session of the General Assembly only three days ago, "If we wish to eliminate violence, we must address its deep-rooted origins with the same resolve employed against the agents of hatred" (A/59/PV.3).

We commend President Obasanjo and his African peers for their commitment to the advancement of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, in particular to the establishment of the conditions for

sustainable development by ensuring sustainable peace and security in the whole continent.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I wish to welcome President Olusegun Obasanjo and thank him for having found time to come to the Security Council to share his views with its members on important issues of interest for the Council and for the African continent. We are indeed very thankful and honoured. I also welcome the presence of His Excellency Mr. Alpha Oumar Konare, chairman of the African Union Commission, and we are particularly honoured that President Sam Nujoma and distinguished ministers have graced this occasion. This is a clear demonstration of the high importance of the issue under consideration this morning.

President Obasanjo, your wisdom and dynamic action has clearly demonstrated how the personal commitment of leaders such as yourself can positively impact on events such as the Darfur crisis. It is our conviction that this will reinforce a new era in the relationship between the Council and the African Union, especially regarding the search for partnership in finding solutions whenever important decisions have to be taken. The Security Council and the African Union have no choice but to cooperate. There is a common understanding that almost 60 per cent of the Council's work is dedicated to Africa. It would therefore indicate a lack of realism to deal with African issues without coordinating fully with the African Union, a body entirely dedicated to the political and economic life of the continent on a daily basis. This is even more relevant since the creation of the Peace and Security Council.

The strength of the partnership between the African Union and the United Nations has been fully demonstrated through the commitment of the two bodies in order to find a solution to the conflict of the Sudanese region of Darfur now. In Burundi, the integration of the African Union contingent into the United Nations Operation in Burundi (UNOB) is also a clear example of cooperation. Lessons should therefore be drawn from those two experiences. With regard to the cooperation of the United Nations and the African Union in the case of Burundi, it is important to know what went wrong and how we could better integrate the two bodies' input in order to render them more effective. Working together in Burundi and in Darfur provides us with the opportunity to better take advantage of Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter regarding cooperation with regional organizations, which are to be fully tapped. In this connection, the establishment of a better channel for the exchange of information should be one of the priorities, in order to enhance our joint capacity to act resolutely and in a timely manner in dealing with crises such as Darfur.

Another relevant aspect has to do with the means that should be provided to the African Union, particularly logistics, as it has been clearly stressed by President Obasanjo. This should be done in a timely manner when a conflict arises, to enable the African Union to adequately play a leadership role in resolving the continent's crises with the support of the United Nations and the international community as a whole.

It is important that Council members be well informed on the work of the African Union, and this is a particularly good opportunity to accomplish this, given the briefing we have just had from President Obasanjo. This is an historic session of the Security Council and should constitute an important building block in reinforcing the partnership between the Security Council and the Peace and Security Council, in providing, in a timely manner, solutions to crises and in building peace and stability, thus creating appropriate conditions for development in the continent.

Mr. Adechi (Benin) (*spoke in French*): At this stage in our discussions, we do not have any questions to ask. We would like to make a few comments.

At the outset, we would like to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, President Obasanjo, for having kindly come to meet with the Council in his capacity as current Chairman of the African Union. We also welcome the presence here of His Excellency the President of the Republic of Namibia, Mr. Sam Nujoma.

The African Union (AU) was created three years ago to speed up the process of integrating African States and to reinforce the capacity of the continent to shoulder increased responsibilities in the quest for effective solutions to its problems. The very instructive briefing that President Obasanjo has just given the Council on the situation in Africa clearly shows his resolve. However, we must recognize that the African Union cannot maintain this role, which it assumed with courage and an acute sense of urgency, if the international community does not mobilize resources

commensurate with the gravity of the situation to effectively support the work of the African Union. We now know what that requires, having been informed by the most authoritative voice, that of the current Chairman of the AU.

Accordingly, we wish to stress that assistance from the international community must be for the long term. Recent studies reveal that in Africa, when the post-conflict situation is not managed properly, in 60 per cent of the cases the conflict resumes. It is a serious challenge. Therefore the United Nations system, in partnership with the African Union, must set up a coordinating mechanism and realize the available potential: coordination of actors and coordination of action.

Mr. Maquieira (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Mr. President, let me first express my very sincere thanks to the presidency for having convened this public meeting. We appreciate this opportunity to be able to learn directly from President Obasanjo, whose presence here today is an honour, about the increasing efforts of the African Union in pursuit of peace and security in Africa, which we strongly support.

As is known, the Security Council has been particularly active in relation to the African agenda. It has secured some important successes in this regard, such as the developments in West Africa. There have been successes because it has been possible to work together, in many cases in accordance with decisions of the African Union or of sectors of the African Union that have committed their support to those processes.

We have been less fortunate in the case of Central Africa, where a general agreement eludes the efforts of this Council and other entities involved. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda, and, particularly until recently, in Burundi, there has been significant progress, although we cannot in good conscience say that peace has returned to that area. The Great Lakes region is an area where the African Union is playing an important leadership role, which should lead to a successful effort.

The humanitarian disaster being experienced in Darfur requires the resolute support of the international community and of this Council, in particular with regard to the efforts of the African Union. For this reason, my country voted in favour of Security Council resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1564 (2004), in the conviction that through them resolute support for the African Union would be established and that they would continue a path of cooperation with the Sudanese Government, whose purpose is to save lives in that country.

In this regard, a number of concerns have arisen this morning. Some have already been mentioned by other members of the Council, but I wish, respectfully, to address a question to President Obasanjo. I would like to have his opinion on a possible Security Council visit or mission to Darfur to reinforce the work that is being done there by the African Union. And perhaps, since much has been said this morning about cooperation between the African Union and the Security Council, it might be interesting, if the logistical details can be worked out, to hold a joint meeting of the Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): I too wish to warmly welcome His Excellency the President of Nigeria to the Security Council. Our appreciation goes also to the Chairman of the African Union Commission.

I wish to congratulate the Spanish presidency on having convened this meeting, which sets a standard for the manner in which the Security Council conducts its business in dealing with issues of regional significance.

Romania is and will remain committed to the peaceful resolution of the Darfur crisis. Romania believes in a prosperous and stable future for the entire Sudan. We appreciate and fully support the African Union's efforts to work out a solution to the crisis.

We praise the personal efforts of President Obasanjo towards enhancing and strengthening the African Union's role in the Darfur crisis. We would like to thank His Excellency for today's timely, comprehensive and substantial briefing. We have full confidence that, under his chairmanship, the African Union's involvement will really make a difference in Darfur. Our delegation considers that, given President Obasanjo's outstanding track record in the last six years as President of Nigeria, we have every reason to hope that the African Union will take significant steps on the road to stability and progress in Darfur.

If I may say so, our confidence in that regard is also based on the very meaning of the name "Obasanjo", which, in the Yoruba language, means, if I am not mistaken, "the king who makes the lives of his

subjects easier". Here, we trust that, during his tenure as Chairman of the African Union, those subjects will include the population of Darfur. I have to confess that my deputy, Ambassador Dumitru, is responsible for that information: he served for five years as Ambassador to Nigeria under His Excellency's presidency.

The recent resolution of the Security Council, resolution 1564 (2004), acknowledges the regional ownership that is at work in resolving this crisis. It encourages and supports further contributions of the African Union. It also adequately reflects the architecture of cooperation in support of addressing the Darfur situation deployed by the United Nations in conjunction with the African Union, the European Union and many individual nations neighbouring Sudan as well as from other continents.

Romania attaches great value to regional ownership and regional solutions to crises that can affect entire regions. Such an approach is essential for Romania, during its present tenure in the Security Council, as an advocate of an updated reading and practice of Chapter VIII provisions as they apply to the realities of our times. Proximity, on-the-ground knowledge and intimate understanding of the problems are, in our view, guarantees of the success of such an approach. Romania intends to organize a public meeting of the Security Council next year on ways to foster greater effectiveness in cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations that are active in conflict resolution around the world.

The success of the African Union monitoring mission in Darfur could be the success of a model to be replicated in other African subregions and on other continents. The partnership between the African Union and the United Nations in facilitating the political settlement and in solving the humanitarian crisis in Darfur needs continuous backing from the international community. In that regard, Romania supports the actions of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Jan Pronk, to harmonize the efforts of regional organizations and the global Organization on the Darfur question.

Romania is of the view that we need to ensure that the African Union has all the necessary resources and our complete assistance in fulfilling its tasks. Romania considers that a sustainable and long-lasting solution to the Sudan's internal crisis can be found only through political talks. The answer to the crisis has to be a negotiated and mutually accepted political solution. We therefore encourage a rapid conclusion of the Naivasha peace talks.

While so much effort has been invested in the North-South dimension of the peace process, we also hope to see a political, negotiated solution to the ongoing conflict in the western region of the Sudan. We encourage both the Government of the Sudan and the rebels to restart negotiations in good faith in order to stop the humanitarian crisis in Darfur. Romania hopes that the Government of the Sudan and the rebels got the right message from Security Council resolutions 1556 (2004) and 1564 (2004).

In its future consideration of the Darfur question, the Council should strive harder to speak with one voice. Romania undertakes to continue to work in that direction. The Security Council's credibility and resolve are at stake in Darfur. Now is the time for the Council to take yet another step in implementing a new approach involving, directly and firmly, regional organizations in solving crises within their respective areas. If that should prove workable in the Sudan — which is, after all, home to the longest conflict on the African continent — it could become a way of action that might be successfully reproduced in other potential or active crises in different regions of the world.

Romania looks forward to the Secretary-General's report on the Sudan that will be issued by the end of the month. We also look forward, more importantly, to seeing positive evolutions on the ground.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank the representative of Romania for his kind words addressed to me.

I now call on the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria to respond to questions raised or to add comments or observations to the statements made by members of the Council.

President Obasanjo: I want to thank all the members of the Council for their interest in and the insight they have shown about the situation generally in Africa and in Darfur in particular. While I cannot address their questions one by one, I will probably deal with most of them in a general way and take a few of them specifically because they are specific.

Let us look at the question of what the Security Council can do in Africa. As members have kindly pointed out, 60 per cent of the time of the Council is now being devoted to African issues. If that is the case, how can we ensure that whatever time is thus devoted is fruitfully devoted? If possible, can we also reduce the amount of time of this body that is being devoted to African issues?

What, really, are the African issues today? Let us not go into what brought them about. The African issues today are issues of conflict, issues of poverty, issues of development and issues of employment. How did those issues come about? Those issues came about because, for too long, Africa was living in an unequal world and Africa did not realize early enough that it was living in an unequal world. To me, that is putting it as it is. If that is the case, how can we make a little bit more available to Africa to correct the situation in Africa as it stands today?

When we look at the conflicts, what are the main causes? One cause is governance and what I call, for lack of a better way of describing it, hopelessness — hopelessness in the political area, hopelessness in the economic area, hopelessness in the social area. A group of people may feel that, no matter what they do, they will not be able to raise themselves up, so they give up in desperation and say to themselves: "Well, if that is the case, let us give it up and die". I believe therefore that we need to look at these problems, ask ourselves where we can put our finger to make Africa do what it needs to do for itself, then help Africa to do what it needs to do for itself.

As was mentioned by one representative here, we have started. The African Union (AU) itself is an acknowledgement by us in Africa that the continental organization that took us thus far could not lead us beyond where it took us. We need, if you will, a reformed organization or a new organization that has greater teeth and a greater ability to take us beyond where we reached with the Organization of African Unity. Then we have a programme that took us time to build up and which came up at about the same time as the African Union: the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD). So we have a new continental organization in the African Union and a continental programme in NEPAD to bring us forward.

If we talk about a new Africa politically, what reform do we need? Continentally, subregionally, internally in our countries — what reform do we need economically, continentally, subregionally? We need regional economic communities and national economic communities in our countries. We need to have a package of desirable reforms that would lead us away from where we are.

I see that we already have a number of measures here at the United Nations. My belief is that the Council should support those measures. For example, an office of the Secretary-General is assigned to the situation in Africa on a permanent basis. This office needs to be equipped so that it can not only report, but also be proactive. The point about early warning and proactive measures was made earlier. We need early warnings ourselves at the African Union level, at the subregional level and at the national level. The Council needs those early warnings here as well, to be able to observe that it knows of one or two countries, for example, where, if things continue to deteriorate, we may have another Somalia on our hands. If we are aware of such situations, then what must we do — at our own level, at that of the AU and that of the Council — to prevent a crisis? This is what I have to say about what can be done.

As we know, the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) was adopted by the United Nations, by the G-8, by the World Bank, by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and by the African Development Bank (ADB). But adoption is not enough. It must be actualized. NEPAD must be embraced and brought to fruition under the auspices of the AU socio-economic programme for development.

As for Sudan, what do we need there? The point has been made that the negotiations that started on resolving the conflict in the south have not been completed. They must be completed. I believe that the completion of those negotiations, which have been halted — I hope they will start again early next month — will have a salutary effect on Darfur. A solution will also have a salutary effect on other areas of Sudan. After more than 20 years, a solution is being found for the south in a comprehensive form that will make that country more united and, at the same time, possibly better governed.

I see that, in one form or the other, there was also a similar exercise in a defence context in the Nuba mountains. Another similar exercise in a different form has been achieved in the southern Blue Nile region.

Maybe, in whatever form, that sort of solution may have to be applied in Darfur. Speaking generally, that is the situation in Sudan. The political problem there must be resolved. We must be ready to support that country's efforts to raise its living standard. We have to help with the economic and social aspects of the lives of the average Sudanese, because, as I said earlier on, the cause of conflict may be, in a word, governance. It might be poor or inadequate, sometimes tied up with an inadequate availability of resources.

Having talked generally about actions in Sudan, let me turn to specifics on Darfur. Council members have rightly said that the immediate objective is to stop the killing. There cannot be any further procrastination or delay. We have to stop the killing by, first of all, holding the Government of Sudan responsible to its population. For the function of any Government is the welfare and well-being of all its citizens. It should provide security and protection to all its citizens. This is a Government's primary responsibility. And the Sudanese Government cannot be exempt from that rule. Whatever else we may do, as the AU or the United Nations or the Security Council itself, it is up to us to help the Sudanese Government in taking responsibility for its people. The Sudanese Government must accept that. It must see a role, in that sense, and then there is no question of our being intruders. I do not see myself as an intruder in Sudan. And, in any case, we in the AU now have a Constitutive Act that does not regard an African troop anywhere in Africa as a foreign troop. This must, of course, be respected.

Having said this, we must make sure that we are even-handed. A situation where some of us are seen as backing the rebels and others backing the Government is not acceptable. That erodes our credibility, collectively or individually. I believe that we must be able to tell them all, evenhandedly and collectively, where they are wrong. We must say to them: "Where you are wrong, you are wrong. And where you are wrong, you will be punished, unless you change. You will be encouraged to change. And where you fail to change, you will be punished." I believe that this is very important.

We, the African Union, have agreed to move in. Now, you ask how many people we are. We are about 3,500 — maybe a few more. That number includes what we call a protection force. This protection force will include both military troops and police. Maybe it will be a little larger, but I think Jan Pronk's report was recommended about 5,000. Initially, we were talking about 3,000. We definitely will require between 3,000 and 5,000. This will include soldiers and possibly some form of fixed-wing aircraft or helicopters. There will be some police, some observers and some civilian personnel. All this will be under the auspices of the AU.

For us, the number is not the issue. I hope that the Government of Sudan will understand that the number is not the issue. For us, there are two issues: first, where we will get the numbers from, and, secondly, the resources — the logistics — to back up those numbers.

We believe also that we cannot engage in an interminable operation in the Sudan or in Darfur. We should have these troops — or forces, or police — until such time as a permanent political arrangement is agreed upon and implemented. Once the implementation has started, the Government of the Sudan must take responsibility for the welfare, well-being, protection and security of all its people.

That brings me to another issue. This is a challenge for us in Africa and for the African Union. We have never undertaken anything like this before, and therefore we are not underestimating what it involves: command and control. We have never done this before — troops from four, five or six missions operating together under a unified command in Africa. We have never done this before, so it will tax all our resources and capacities. It will require all our experience to do this.

We have been saying to the world: "Give us the tools, and we will do the job". Now you are putting us to the test, saying, "We will give you the tools; you do the job." We have to make sure that that job is properly done, because, otherwise, we will hear, "Well, we have given you the tools, and you have made it a mess of it." We do not want to do that, so we want adequate tools and the organization that will match the work we have to do, and we want to be able to do that work smartly and expeditiously, and then say to the world, "We have done the job. Thank you for helping us to do the job and to achieve what we have achieved."

As to what else can be done, I wish to thank Brazil, who rightly noted that we must have early warning and that we must be proactive. There must be enhanced cooperation between the Council and the new Africa. Should it be on a case-by-case basis? I will say that we need both a structured relationship, and, where

necessary, a case-by-case approach. But there is definitely a need for a structured relationship.

The question was asked if the Security Council should visit Darfur. I do not see any reason why, and I do not see any reason why not.

The idea of a joint meeting between our own Peace and Security Council in Africa and this body has been mentioned. I believe that it would be a useful meeting, but it must have an agenda: what it aims to achieve. If the goal is just for us to come here to have a wonderful time in New York, I would say no. If the goal is just for you to come to Addis Ababa and have a wonderful time with us, I would say no. It must be well prepared. What do we want to achieve? What areas do we want to cover, and what is the objective at the end of the day?

Concerning the time table for a political settlement at the end of this exercise, I do not believe that one can really set a time table and say, "This is when it will be over". I was talking to the Chairperson of the African Union Commission yesterday, when we were looking at the general programme and seeing what we could do and so on, and I said — as I said earlier in this meeting — that we cannot have a prolonged presence of AU troops or an AU protection force in Darfur.

Without wanting to be accused of mentioning timing or a programme, I am looking at a period of six months to get everything done, to be able to normalize and to get the AU forces thinned out. We cannot afford the usual — United Nations forces starting out for six months and remaining for six decades. We just cannot afford that. We do not have the means, and it is not in our best interest in Africa.

As concerns the lifting of sanctions on timber and diamonds in Liberia, I do not see why those sanctions should not be lifted. I think that the reasons for which the sanctions had been imposed have now been overtaken. But if there are others reasons of which I am not aware, I would like to know about them. But I believe that the sanctions can be lifted.

I think that I have covered everything. If I have left anything out, please forgive me. Council members have said so much and they have asked so many questions, all of which are very good and very useful. I have taken such copious notes that I have even missed some out.

Let me end on a light note. My friend from Romania gave the meaning of my name in my language, and it is almost correct. He said that I should include the people of Darfur among my subjects — if President Al-Bashir of the Sudan has no objection. Normally we in Nigeria have no territorial ambitions, but, if anyone wants to cede part of his country to us, we will consider it.

The President (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish warmly to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria for his clarifications, for his sense of humour, for his comments and his profound thoughts, and, above all, his tremendous commitment to continue, on behalf of his country and of the African Union, to work to find a solution to the grave problems facing Africa and Darfur in particular.

I believe that this meeting has been useful to all members of the Council in clarifying the situation. The comments, reflections and responses will undoubtedly be instructive and useful to Council members as we continue our consideration of the item on our agenda we are considering as well as in general, as we continue to consider issues of peace and security in Africa which are on the Council's agenda.

I am certain that, under the leadership of the President of Nigeria, and with his commitment and his vision, today we can conclude our meeting with a greater feeling of hope that the cooperation between the Council and the African Union and the general endeavours of the international community will enable us in the next few weeks to work with somewhat more optimism to find a solution to this grave humanitarian crisis. There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

On behalf of the Council, I wish, once again, very particularly to thank the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, His Excellency Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, for having taken the time to meet with the Security Council.

I express the wish to see continued and strengthened collaboration between the United Nations and the African Union in all matters relating to peace and security on the Africa continent.

The meeting rose at 12.20 p.m.